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More than 3,000 Saudi Students Graduate from U.S. Colleges

WASHINGTON, June 22, 2011 – A ceremony was held on Saturday to celebrate the graduation of more than 3,000 Saudi students who completed their studies in the U.S. under the King Abdullah Scholarship Program (KASP).

The Minister of Higher Education Khaled Al-Anqari and Saudi Ambassador to the U.S. Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir were present to honor the students at the ceremony. In a videotaped message, the U.S Ambassador to Saudi Arabia James B. Smith congratulated the Saudi graduates, their families, and participants and institutions cooperating with the program.

“This is a memorable day for both our countries,” said Ambassador Al-Jubeir. “The choice to study in the U.S. should undoubtedly expose students to new ideas and strengthen the exchange between both countries. The goal of the King Abdullah Scholarship Program has always been to promote dialogue and cultural exchange through our youth and these students exemplify that.”

In his opening remarks, the Minister of Higher Education Dr. Khaled Al-Anqari said the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques' Program for Foreign Scholarship began with 5,000 students and has reached a total of more than 120,000 students in 34 countries.

Through the scholarship program, more than 43,500 students from Saudi Arabia are currently studying throughout the U.S. The Kingdom is ranked seventh among countries for sending international students to study abroad in the U.S. Saudi Arabia moved up from 10th last year, reflecting the government's substantial investment in study abroad scholarships.

Also on Saturday, the U.S. Saudi Cultural Mission held its first Saudi career fair in Maryland, where private sector organizations met graduates of the scholarship program. The fair hosted 55 organizations, including Saudi Aramco, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Saudi Arabian Airlines.

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